



Damselfly Nymph

Damselflies are related to dragonflies.

What they look like

Damselfly Nymphs have slender bodies, with three long tail-like gills at the end. They have extendable jaws that fold up under the head (like Dragonfly Nymphs), and legs close behind their head. Large compound eyes (eyes made from lots of smaller eyes) give them excellent vision.

Where they live

Damselfly Nymphs live on plants, among stones and leaf litter at the bottom of ponds or slow-flowing rivers.

What they eat

Damselfly Nymphs are predators and feed mostly on other insects in the water, but they also can be cannibals, eating each other. Some larger species have been known to feed on small fish. They catch their food with a toothed lower lip (*labium*) that is usually folded under the insect's head. When a small insect comes near, the nymph will shoot out its lower lip to grab its prey. The lip is then pulled back and feeding begins.

Pollution tolerance

Tolerant, rating 3

Damselfly Nymphs are sensitive to habitat disturbance. They need aquatic or riparian vegetation in the waterways where they live.

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Pollution tolerance	Very sensitive Sensitive Tolerant Very tolerant
Size	16 - 33 mm long

What's interesting about the Damselfly Nymph?

- More than eight-tenths of their brain is devoted to analysing visual information.
- They do not go through a pupal stage to become an adult.

Where they fit in

Phylum Arthropoda > **Class** Insecta > **Order**

Odonata > **Sub Order** Zygoptera > **Family**

(11 Australian families): Hemiphelebiidae; Coenagrionidae; Isostictidae; Protoneuridae; Lestidae; Lestoideidae; Megapodagrionidae; Sylestidae; Amphipterygidae; Calopterygidae; Chlorocyphidae

